



Messages For Young Women

By Alvin Erickson
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1. We women are to value ourselves as made in the image of God and honored for our lives and place on this planet. Trauma, molestation, rape, bullied and violence do not lessen a woman's value nor diminish what she has to contribute to the people around her.
2. When a young woman has experienced abuse from someone or abandonment by a father or mother or other trauma, she may be very vulnerable to manipulation. People may come into her life saying they will fill that void. They may say all the right things to build her up only to get her into a position where they can take advantage of her. This can be done with subtlety, leading to very harmful long-term consequences such as being drawn into using drugs or into being trafficked.
3. A common fallacy is that a young woman should be able to see it coming. Many times the predators are too treacherously sly. They seem too **real**, charming, concerned and fun loving to have harmful intent. The game they play is to say whatever, to do whatever works. Once they have trapped a young woman, they may become very controlling, possibly violent. Watch out for someone or some promise that seems to be too good to be true.
4. There are two foolish messages we might listen to. a. One is to just go ahead, nothing bad can happen, be popular, be sexual, be free. b. The other is just the opposite—you blew it, you are used merchandise, you can't protect yourself, you might as well get paid for it. Remember we can walk away from or refuse to talk to anyone. This will take strength!
5. There are two wise messages we often forget: a. We get to set our own boundaries. What is it, which would have our own lives work, our own dignity honored and makes the people in our future like husband and children proud? Have we decided what those boundaries are and will we hold to them? b. If we find ourselves doing something, which makes us feel cheap and full of self-loathing, is it not better to be bold and to



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state that to a friend, be loved and receive forgiveness from God, claiming our God-given dignity again?

6. When things start going bad for us, we usually retreat into ourselves and try to solve our own problems. Often this simply means we hope things will get better. They usually don't. Our minds invalidate us. Running away puts us at the mercy of strangers who often want something from us, take advantage of us. At that time we can and should turn from our natural independence and find people we can trust and get them involved in our hurt and dilemma. We want to find someone quickly but not the wrong person. To discover the best resources out there. There are people who care even if it doesn't feel like it. Communicate! The cost to our future family and ourselves is too great to let some matters go unresolved.

7. The sex industry now asks women to participate in its exploitation of vulnerable people by luring women to be customers of pornography, strip clubs and prostitution. What might appear harmless or funny still amounts to the devastating practice of using other human beings with no regard for their lives. By so doing, do we women not arrogantly support the nonsense of men and buy into the lies and violence of the sex industry? Encouraging the using of humans, will we betray other young people by setting no boundaries ourselves?